

Perfecting That Which Is Lacking: Isolation

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[0 : 00] So, having finished the book of Ruth, we're going to start off with a new series, kind of in between books.

As it were, we'll study something a little more topical. And so this morning, we're just going to be kicking this off and introducing it, and then maybe getting into the first, I don't even know what to call this, but the first section of it.

And no doubt, we won't even get close to finishing the first portion. But just try to follow along and get the gist of what we want to be doing here in the next few weeks. Ephesians 4, let's read together one verse to begin.

Verse number 12, Paul's describing some offices that the Lord has gifted to the local church, to his body. I hope nobody read into that and made it sound like I was saying that the body of Christ is a... never mind.

Okay. In verse number 11, he says, and he gave some apostles and some prophets and some evangelists and some pastors and teachers. And here's why. Verse 12, for the perfecting of the saints.

[1 : 08] Reason number one. For the perfecting of the saints. Now, you know doctrinally that when you trust Jesus Christ, the Bible says that you're complete in him.

So you don't need any perfecting in that sense. In Jesus Christ, you have all the righteousness you'll ever get. You have total forgiveness of sins. You are a child of God.

And that's settled. That's sealed. That's forever. That's good. You have eternal life. So doctrinally, and to the praise of God for that, that's done. But today, you're not so perfect, are you?

You're not so complete in your walk, in your daily walk. And so there's some changes that need to be made. When you trust Christ, you just get in on it.

And doctrinally, that's secure. And yet, there's so much inside of you that needs to get out in order to be a real pleasure to God daily, more and more and more and more.

[2 : 04] And he's got some place that he wants to take you. And so he gives some positions in the local church. And we could say some other things. He gives his word to sanctify you, the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of Christ inside of you.

He gives you brothers and sisters to be examples to you, all of this, to perfect you. Because you need perfecting. And that's something I want us to just start with, is that you need to be perfected. In other words, there's areas in your life, in your Christian life, in your spiritual walk with Jesus Christ, that just aren't good enough. In you.

In me. Absolutely in me. So I'll start with me, so you don't feel so bad or guilty. There's plenty in me. And there's plenty in you, too.

And it's not because you don't have the resources that I've already mentioned. And it's not because you can't overcome things in your flesh and things in this world.

[3 : 05] It's not that reason. But you still fall short. Or maybe we could say you're deficient in some ways. You need to be perfected. And it's what God's calling for. Look down at verse number 15 in this passage.

Ephesians 4, verse 15. But speaking the truth in love may grow up into him. Look at the next three words. In all things. In all things.

There's to be growth or perfecting or completion or maturing. It's not just the areas that come natural to you or that become obvious to you.

That, oh, I really need to work on this or God's review could be about this. But it's in all things. And it'd be unwise of me to try to just find the biggest list of all things in the Bible and put them on you.

In one moment of time. And say, that's what you need to work on. And God doesn't do that. But incrementally, as you grow and as you trust him and as you walk with him, he reveals things. He opens your eyes to things about you that need to change to become more like him.

[4 : 12] He's perfecting you a little bit at a time. You'll be saved 30 years, 40 years. And the Lord will still deal with your heart about some things that just find their way back in.

Or some things that you never really let go of the whole time. Because you need perfecting. I want to show you a few more verses on this. And then we'll kind of dive into something. Look at 1 Thessalonians.

Go to the right. 1 Thessalonians chapter 3. God is seeking to perfect you in this life in all things. So I want to take away the times where you like to excuse some things and say, Well, that's just the way I am. That's just the way God made me. No, if it's not right, it's not right.

If it's not up to his standard, it's not right. So he wants to perfect that in you. And he wants you to submit to him in it. And he said all things. All right.

[5 : 08] 1 Thessalonians 3. Let's read a few verses here. I'll start in verse 10. Paul's speaking to this church night and day, praying exceedingly that we might see your face and might perfect that which is lacking in your faith.

Now, God himself and our father and our Lord Jesus Christ direct our way unto you. And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another and toward all men, even as we do toward you, to the end that he may establish your hearts unblameable in, what's the next word, somebody?

In holiness before God. That sounds like being perfected in all things. To be able to be established unblameable in holiness before God.

Now, if you keep reading, he says, Even our father at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints. Somebody will say, well, that's in the future when we're made like him. That's when we'll be unblameable in holiness.

And again, there's a truth to that when we're glorified together. But God's seeking to perfect things in you today. He's not just letting you say, hey, just hold on to a couple of sins.

[6 : 22] I'll fix them one day. Look a little later. I'm going to skim down. Look at verse chapter 4. Look at verse 7. 4-7.

For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness. He talks about sanctification in verse number 3. The Lord is seeking to perfect things in you.

Not reserved for just the future when he transforms you into the likeness of his son. But he wants to do it today. He wants to perfect that which is lacking.

For the perfection of the saints. Alright, come back to one more verse on this. 2 Corinthians chapter 7. 2 Corinthians 7.

If you're familiar with the scriptures here, the previous passage ends by a coming out.

[7 : 30] A separation from uncleanness and from idolatry and from unbelievers. And having no communion with them. And then verse number 1.

Chapter 7 verse 1. Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved. Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit.

Notice the next two words. Perfecting holiness in the fear of God. That's for you right now. Today. That should be your goal. That should be your aim. That's God's aim. And if your will is united to his. And your spirit is submitted to his. Then that's your goal.

Is to cleanse myself. If it's wrong God, I want it out. Because you want it out. If it's not for you, I'll let go of it. Perfecting holiness.

[8 : 30] I know people get nervous when you bring up that word. And I do too. Because I got a flesh in me that doesn't want to ever know what that's like. It wants to stay away from it.

It's afraid of it. Sounds like a lot of work. Sounds like a lot of discipline. Sounds like a lot of fighting. And my flesh says, no, no, no, no, no.

You can't be more than you are. You're never going to make it. You're going to fall on your face.

You're a hypocrite. You'll try and you'll make a big public stand. And then you'll fall in private.

And then you'll be a hypocrite. You'll lose all your power. And the flesh gives me plenty of reasons. But the scripture doesn't. The scripture says perfect holiness.

It's time to perfect that which is lacking. It's time to clean some things up. And turn them over to God. And let go. And seek holiness in your life. And now, what I want to start now with you.

[9 : 29] For the next, I don't know how many weeks. I got a list here. And I will see how many we tackle. But I want to address certain areas in the Christian life. In your Christian life, maybe, that has not yet been perfected.

There's things you could just say. This is just talking about sins. You could call it that. But we'll look at it in a much more diplomatic way. It'll sound a lot better. I'm going to aim at some things.

And contrast some things. Some things that might come natural to you. That shouldn't be in you.

But you just kind of gravitate toward. Or it's because it's easier.

It's easier to be this than to be that. And these little things I want to point out. Some of them are going to seem real common. And then others maybe not so much. And I'm doing that on purpose. Because what I'd like to try and attempt here.

Is to expose some of the lesser addressed things. Where you're not being perfected. You're not perfecting holiness. Or you're even just letting this be. Because it's okay.

[10 : 30] But it doesn't wash with the word of God. I'm going to give you a few examples here. And kind of let you know. Kind of the idea of what we're going to pick out.

And point out over the next several weeks. If in fact we hit all of these. One of them. It's easy to give up. It's easy to give up on reading your Bible.

Isn't it? Because who knows. If you stop reading your Bible. That's an easy one. Just let drop. And then just let drift. And then. You can show up here.

And not be in the word of God. It's easy to give up on fighting sins. It's easy to give up on. On commitments. Or things you surrender to the Lord. It's easy to stop fighting.

That's easy. And I want to challenge you. To pick it up. And start fighting again. And get some resolve in the new man. That you're going to endure. And that you're going to fight.

[11 : 26] Until Jesus Christ calls you home. That's what you're going to do. And so giving up. And versus fighting. Versus getting involved. Another one that's pretty common. Is fear.

Or letting stress and anxiety. Things like that. Build up inside of you. And get to you. And conquer you. And not exercise faith.

Because you're called to walk in faith. You're told to walk by faith. And by faith you stand. And to live by faith. And it's very easy. It's so much easier to just fear the problems in your life.

And the things coming. And with our nation. With your finances. With your children. With your health. Just to get all worked up about it. Instead of just lay it at the altar. Give it to God.

And walk by faith. You need to perfect holiness in this. And fear has no place in the new man. Faith does. The fruit of the spirit's faith. God has not given us the spirit of fear.

[12 : 29] There's a couple others we'll talk about. But today I just want to dive right into what I want to get after today. We're already losing time quickly. I want to contrast two things.

And the terminology is going to sound vague to you. But just follow me. I want to contrast isolation. Versus unification. I know that just sounds like terms.

And it doesn't really speak to you yet. So just stick with me. I want to show you one of them is very easy. And the other one is one that you need to commit to. And seek to perfect in your life.

Isolation this morning versus unification. Isolation is. I'm not talking about going into reclusion. And finding a pit or cave somewhere up in those hills. And getting off the grid. Nobody knows you.

No cell phone. No contact. No government. They are not spying on me. I don't mean that. At all.

Isolation is. Is much more subtle than that. It's being present.

[13 : 27] But still hiding. But still keeping your distance. Being in church. But keeping everybody just at arm's reach. And never letting them get into you.

And you get into this place. Staying isolated. Staying at a distance. Avoiding personal relationships. And I'm not talking about being shy. Or being a quiet person.

I'm not talking about your personality at all. That's not it. It's a choice. A choice. A choice. A choice that you're going to be tempted to make. And many of you do make. And it's something you need to perfect.

In your Christian life. Is to stop isolating. The temptation that you have. Is to avoid being seen. To avoid being transparent. To avoid being available.

To avoid being committed. And so you stay back. Just far enough. Not all the way out. But just not in. And you isolate.

[14 : 25] You refuse to get involved. And you can attend church. You can come in here this morning. You can sing. You can smile. You can shake some hands. But you still keep everybody at

bay.

You just will not get too close. Because for you that's too close for comfort. And I want comfort. I want to stay where I call the shots. And to where I'm not accountable to anybody.

And that's a temptation in people in churches. It's getting to be an epidemic in churches. To where nobody's committed. And the 10% do everything. And everybody else just takes what they can take.

And leaves what they leave. And do what they want. You're not going to get me. You're not going to nail me down. And it's all over churches today. It's becoming far more of an epidemic than it's ever been. Isolating.

Backing off. You can come to church and never get too close. Keep everything on the surface. Meaning a little bit of fakeness to it. All your relationships in church are shallow.

[15:23] As little as possible. Not authentic. Not real. Not open. Nobody knows you. The real you. Because you won't let them.

You're staying away. And it's not healthy. And it's not good for you. And it's not good for the church. And it's not the Lord's will for you. You realize the local church is an establishment of God.

For his children. Not for the lost. For his children. If you're a child of God. You ought to be plugged in. To a local church. Purposely. Meaningly.

Just I want to be here. I want to be part of this. Because this is what God has given me. In this world. He's given me a local church. A family. Of believers.

Like minded. To fellowship with. To love. To weep with. To rejoice with. To work with. To pray with.

[16:20] All of these things. Instead. It's easy for some. Maybe it's not you. But for somebody it is. It's easier to be withdrawn.

It's easier to stay just far enough away. But close enough. And that's where you like to be comfortable. Somewhat detached really. That's what I'm talking about with isolation.

And so I want to say two things about this. This morning. Isolation is easy. But it's dangerous. It's dangerous. So first of all. Let's decide why it's easy.

And here's why it's easy. This is where your flesh just slides right in. And says this is for me.

Isolation is easy because you don't have to be accountable. Nobody really knows what's going on in your life.

They see your face when you're here. But nobody knows what you do. All week long. Because you don't have any contact with them. You don't come in here and let anybody know.

[17:18] You just stay away. You isolate. And that's dangerous. You're a mystery. And you want to stay that way. And it's not right.

And it's not of the Lord. You say well I'm shy. Be shy. But be shy with your brothers and sisters. And be here. And let them know. Who you are and what's going on in your life.

It's not healthy for a Christian. To be isolated. It's not healthy for your Christian life. It's not healthy for your Christian growth and development. As you seek to perfect. That which is lacking.

You need to be connected. I'm not interested. There's a little asterisk here. I'm absolutely not interested in getting into everybody's business. And being a busy body in other men's matters.

And having you and me and just everybody knows everything about everybody. That's of the devil just as much as the other way. So we're not going down that road at all. I think you fully understand what I'm talking about here.

[18:18] About just staying just withdrawn enough. Just staying reserved and detached. And not committed or unified with the believers. When somebody wants to attend church.

But not be accountable to that church. Not be accountable to the members of that church. They tend to isolate. They tend to stay back. And they disconnect themselves.

They attend. But they also miss. And it's no thing to them. Because they're just kind of keeping it at distance.

Staying a bit isolated. And it's easy. If you get connected. You understand that there might be some things expected of you. And you understand that people might be checking up on me more.

They might want to know where I'm at and why I'm not here. So I'll just stay back just far enough that I can come and go as I please. And not really create any waves.

[19:15] Not really be on anybody's radar. There's freedom when you isolate. There's freedom for you to skip church. Or to not participate in church functions. Or just couldn't make it.

Because that's normal. Because I keep myself away. And it's wrong. I want to give you an example of a brother that we all know. Just a few months ago. Greg and his brother and those guys left. And moved to Arizona. And we miss him. He's such a blessing. And such a joy. And just full of life. And everybody knows who I'm talking about. I'm sure for the most part everybody here. And he moved.

And he's been talking to me. And staying in touch with me. Really probably several times a week we talk. And he told me over the holidays. That he recently started opening up. And he got to spend some more personal time with the pastor. With some families in the church. And he said he's just started now opening up to them. And letting them know his story. And if you know Greg.

[20 : 14] He's got that personality. Where he just. He's not going to be quiet. And he's not going to meet you. He's going to meet everybody. And you're all going to know who he is. And you're just a very easy guy to like. So he's been in that church.

I want to say probably three months now. And said to me. Just now. Beginning to open up. Probably within the month. And really get. Deeper connection. More real bonds with those people. In other words. He started a stranger. Like dead on stranger. Walked into a church for the first time. And never knew a soul. Barely knew the name of the pastor. He started a stranger. But he's not staying a stranger. He's not staying a stranger. He doesn't want to stay a stranger. He wants to unite. He wants to get in. He wants to serve God with these people. And that's what he's doing.

And that's the way it should be. And so he's opening up. And as relationships grow. With that family. And that church. Familiarity grows. And so does accountability. And expectations.

[21 : 17] It's a two-way street. As he opens up to them. And seeks the fellowship with them. And seeks to unite with them. They open up to him. And receive him in. And as that bond is formed.

So does that accountability come with it. So does that expectation. And as he joins with those believers. They're going to now expect him. To be faithful. To be living the Christian life. To be giving. To be helping. To be accountable. That's the way it works. That's the way it ought to work. And he's showing up. And he's functioning now.

As a part of that body. Not staying isolated. Not staying at a distance. Saying well. I know Christians. I've heard about Christians.

I know how they can be. I'm not going to get in with them. I'll worship the Lord. But don't expect much from me. I'm not going to get burned. You're not going to be sucking all the life out of me.

[22 : 13] And using me. And you can come with excuses. Or you can just surrender to the Lord. And dive right in. Jump in with both feet. Isolation is easy.

Because you don't need to be accountable. It's also easy. Because you don't have to be responsible. You can't really give much level of responsibility.

To somebody who's not really in. You can't count on them. You don't know if they're going to show up. And so some people want it that way. They don't want responsibility. And so they keep the church at arm's length.

Maybe I'll come. Maybe I won't. Maybe I'll help. Maybe I won't. Is the attitude. Isolated. Isolated. They're like an unrestricted free agent. In a local church. Can just come and go as you please. Not going to nail me down.

[23 : 10] Ever. Turn over to Philippians. You're not too far away. Look at Philippians chapter 2. I'm going to point out a verse here. A little passage. Something Paul says. As he's writing to this church in Philippi.

And he sends to them. A man Timotheus. That is pastoring. If the timing I understand is right. Timotheus is pastoring in Ephesus.

And he sends the pastor of Ephesus. To the church at Philippi. He takes him away from his work. To minister to these people.

And I want to point out something here. Look at verse number 19. Philippians chapter 2 verse 19. But I trust in the Lord Jesus. To send Timotheus shortly unto you.

That I also may be of good comfort. When I know your state. For I have no man like minded. Who will naturally care. For your state. Now later on in the chapter.

[24 : 13] You read about Epaphroditus. He's probably the one that's. Delivering this message. Or he's your messenger. Him that ministered. Epaphroditus is a pretty good guy. But apparently he's

no Timotheus.

And Paul says. I have no man like minded. Who will naturally care. For your state. For all seek their own. Not the things. Which are Jesus Christ.

There's nobody else I could count on here on this. Because everybody else is looking. To what pleases them. To what benefits them. And that's the truth in local churches.

Even more so today. Is nobody wants to be responsible. Nobody wants to have the weight put on them. They want to stay out of the picture.

Stay uncommitted. Every church has them. And as I said it earlier. It's becoming an epidemic.

People refuse to get too close. No genuine commitment. To the church.

[25 : 12] And therefore. No responsibility. Can be assumed. And no responsibility. Can be delegated to you. If anything. Just the bare minimum. Because I want to keep my options open.

In case anything else comes up in my life. In case I have anything else better for me. To do. Today. When I was back in Pennsylvania. Where I was working in a building at the church.

And I was. I don't remember what I was doing. But. I was kind of up in another area. Of the facilities. And I just remember kind of stacking. Or placing some box.

Some something going on there. And some two fellows. That were friends of mine. From the church. Showed up. And they were pretty excited. They were looking for me. And they found me up there. And they came in. And were.

They know me. I like football. They're football fans. And as far as. The close brethren. They were them. The football fans. And so they come up.

[26 : 08] And I'm working. And they're like. Tobe. Tobe. Guess what? Bears. Eagles. Sunday night. We can get tickets. For free.

From a guy at his work. He can get tickets. Three of them. They were like glowing. Bears. Eagles. Now we had church on Sunday night. And so. I had my back to them.

And they're. I could hear it in their voice. Their excitement. And I turned. And I looked. And they're like. They're both like. And I didn't share that. Because when I heard Sunday night. I mean.

At first. It was like. Bears. Whoop. Bears. Eagles. Whoop. What's going on? I'm excited. Until I heard Sunday night. It just. It stopped. It dropped. Right there. For me.

That's just. That's where I was. And. When I heard that. They're. They're pumped. And their faces are just like. Glowing. And exciting. Like. Wait. Wait. Wait. Until he hears this. And I looked at him.

[27 : 02] I'm like. So. Sorry. I'm like. Sunday night. You said Sunday night. I'll be here. And I wasn't being a jerk to him.

I promise you. I made sound like it. I wasn't. I was just being. Just. That was authentic. They needed to hear me. Say that. Apparently. Because Bears.

Eagles. Was kind of like. That sounded really good. Until Sunday night. Which to me. Was. Kind of like. Up and above the roof there. That's. That's the. Where they stand. There wasn't anything.

That was going to keep me. From coming to church Sunday night. You know. What was not going to happen. My wife. Was not going to take her. Four little kids. And get them ready for church.

And take them down to church. And get them set up in the pew. And have one say. Mommy. Where's daddy? Oh. He's watching the. He's at the Bears Eagles game. No. Never.

[27 : 57] Never. Is she going to tell my children. Daddy's. Playing. But we're here in church. We had to come to church. It's never. By the grace of God.

And you know what. I was taught that. By a good family. Good examples of. Parents to be in church. And put a priority on it. But. It wasn't the. It wasn't the training.

Or the brainwashing. That this is what you do. That wasn't what. Made me look at that. Option. It was. My. Personal relationship.

With Jesus Christ. My desire. Above anything. To serve him. And obey him. And please him. In every choice. Especially. Right there.

And so that was an easy one to me. But you know. Some people. To their fault. Would rather stay. Just a little bit removed. So that.

[28 : 54] When those things come up. They can grab him. And nobody's knowing. Nobody's asking. And nobody seems to care. And they can live that life. Instead of being committed.

To the Lord Jesus Christ. And to attending. Your local church. You may not think about this. You may not really think about this. But when you're not here. We know it.

I know it. And I'm not keeping attendance. I'd say God might be. But I'm not keeping attendance. On you. And I can tell you. Where you've missed. And. No.

I don't do that. But I sense it. I mean. I see it. When you sit in that spot. In that spot. In that spot. And it's empty. Everybody feels it. Everybody senses it.

There's a place missing. At the table. Remember when David wasn't there. And the king saw. He's like. Where's he at? Because there's a place set for him. It's time to eat.

[29 : 48] He should be here. And you should be here. But. It's easier to kind of. Isolate yourself enough. And keep yourself back. One more thing.

Isolation's. Easy. Because. You don't have to be vulnerable. You don't have to be vulnerable. So you can just keep yourself. A little bit removed.

People might realize. You don't have it all together. Like you'd like them to believe. People might come to see. That you struggle with some things. You're not perfect yet.

But you need to be perfecting. That which is lacking. And working. Striving to perfect holiness. And so people will stay isolated. So they don't have to be vulnerable.

They avoid relationships. In church. They avoid those spiritual bonds. That God our father. Would have us build together. But they don't want that.

[30 : 46] Because when I get in. They're going to know me. And they're going to understand me. And they're going to see my flaws. And my imperfections. And I'd rather. I'd rather them. Have this unrealistic reputation.

Or thought. When they consider me. He's a smart guy. He knows the Bible. He's. He's really sharp. He's really funny. He's this or. No. People don't want to be vulnerable.

You know. When. When tragedy hits. In your life. When something like. Tough shows up. It's easy to isolate. It's easy to just.

To back up. To. To withdraw. I don't want to be. I don't want to say too much here. But. There's a. A fellow recently.

Went through some pretty ugly stuff. And in going through it. He disappeared. And then he popped in. But then he just. And. Tried to sit down.

[31 : 46] Talk with him. Tried to just. Just. Once in a while. He'd open up. Just a little bit. But not much. Why? Because he chose to isolate. And chose to pull back. Instead of get in.

And let me just put a few. Verses of scripture on this. Look at. Here. I got three of them. I just. Go to Romans 13. That's the first one. When you need for others.

To be helping. And lifting you up. The temptation. The easier thing to do. Is just. Just draw back. Just stay out of. Stay out of reach. And sadly.

You decline. And dive into pity. Into pain. And. And just. Just feel that. And feel like. I'd rather be here.

Than there. Romans 13. Look at verse. Number 15. Rejoice with them. That do rejoice. Weep with them.

[32 : 47] That weep. Now I'm not. Charging you. The local church. To be. Looking for the person. That's hurting. Not. Not just now. Just. Just. Plug that little thought.

Into your mind. That we're commanded. To weep. With them. That weep. Look over at. Galatians chapter 6. Galatians 6.

I'm going to pop another. Little verse here off. And then. Going to go to. First Thessalonians 5. And I got a kind of hustle here. Galatians 6.

The first verse said. To weep with them. That weep. Galatians 6. Verse 2. Bear ye. One another's. Burdens.

And so fulfill. The law of Christ. So there's another thought. We want to add to that. Weeping. Is to bear. One another's burden. Flip over now. To 1st Thessalonians 5.

[33 : 46] This will be the last verse here. Verse number 11. 1st Thessalonians 5.

Verse 11. Wherefore. Comfort yourselves. Together. And edify. One another. Even as also ye do. Now these are just. Plucking out phrases. There's. A ton. We could really go through. Quite a chain. Of things. In this very nature. Of issues. People struggling.

People dealing with things. And how the church. Can be of help. What I want you to consider here. Is we're to be weeping. Or mourning. With each other. To bearing each other's burden.

Comforting. And edifying. Each other. All these commands. Are to be fulfilled. By members of a local church. But they can't do it. If you excuse yourself.

[34 : 49] And pull yourself back. You've got a body. That will edify you. And comfort you. And even weep with you. If you'll let them. And they'll bear that burden.

With you. But inside. You're like. I can't let them see me. Like this. I can't show my face. I want them to think. So. They know you're not here. But they'd rather you be here.

Isolation's not healthy. It doesn't help you. And God gave you some things. Some tools. Some people that will love you. He didn't give you the local church.

To chew you out. To judge you. To. To text about you. To pass your info around.

To gossip. He didn't give you the local church. So that they could attack you. He gave them to you.

To be a help to you.

[35 : 48] And to lift you up. Especially. When you're vulnerable. But your temptation. That you need to perfect. Your temptation is to isolate.

And to withdraw. And to back off. And to not open up. It's not of the Lord. It's of your flesh. That fellow I told you about. Briefly.

That kind of withdrew himself. From church. You know what he found. Where he found company. He found company. With other people that. Could take or leave church as well. He didn't come find people.

That are going to stay tight with him. And draw him in. To where the Lord's going to minister to him. And the word of God's going to help him. No. He sought. Sought company that. Stays on the fence too.

And they're all gone. It's easy to isolate church. It's easy to put up a wall. It's easy to stay out of sight. To not be transparent. To refuse to be accountable.

[36 : 47] To refuse to be responsible. To refuse to be vulnerable. That's easy. And it's wrong. And let's focus on these lesser common things.

And let's put a little microscope on this. If this is you. Because you need to perfect it. You need to repent of it. You need to confess it. You need to open yourself up.

You need to take it in prayer to the Lord. And see how he would have you respond. It could be. I'm not saying this for my benefit at all. It's for yours. It could be that he would say. Why don't you call pastor.

And talk to him about it. Why don't you schedule time. And just sit down. And talk it out a little bit. And just open up. I promise you. I won't. I won't tell. Anybody.

Anybody. I'll bear the burden with you. If I could. It's what I'm here for. What in the world. Let me do my job. So come on. Don't withdraw.

[37 : 44] Don't run away. Get in. Get into those resources. Let's close. Father. Lord. I pray that your people have ears to hear. And would receive this thought this morning.

That it would be helpful.